

If we seek wisdom and understanding, if we seek comfort and care, if we seek rest for our weary souls, we must first seek God, through the Holy Spirit. Are you seeking? Personally, I can think of no better place to seek than at the Table of the Lord, where we are about to celebrate communion. Here, in the mystery of this sacrament, Christ is with us. Here, in this mystery, we are united to God and to each other through the power of the Holy Spirit. Here, at this table, we find that the Understanding that we seek has been calling to us all along. Will you respond?

Christ. We know a little bit about this person, Jesus, don't we? How he suffered rejection, betrayal, torture, and death? Through Jesus, God experienced true loneliness, pain, and loss. If we have any question about the limits of God's wisdom, we can look into the understanding eyes of Jesus Christ. We must seek God, who continues to move in us and through us today through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In addition to being called Wisdom, the Holy Spirit is also called the Advocate, and the Comforter. In whatever pain, sorrow, hopelessness, and loneliness we experience, we have a Comforter who is all the wisdom that we need. There are no good reasons for suffering. But we can find comfort in the Wisdom of God, through the Holy Spirit.

Often, in the depths of our despair, our questions, and our spiritual or physical suffering, we don't even have the words to pray to God. We don't have the words to express the burdens of our souls and to seek God's comfort. But we are assured in Romans 8 that though "we do not know how to pray as we ought, that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Though we are at a loss for words, the Holy Spirit gives words to our deepest groanings. We are understood and loved to a greater degree than we will ever know.

Of course, Job wasn't asking about how the world was created. Job wanted to know why he was suffering. What had he done, and what was God doing to him? And God's response? "You wouldn't understand."

There are many things we do not understand. I don't understand what it is like to watch the floodwater rise in your home, to move valuables from the first floor to the second, only to see the rising waters claim them anyways. I don't understand what it is to be truly and desperately hungry or thirsty, or to live through the terror of war in your backyard. There are things that we cannot understand because we have not experienced them first-hand. We can give thanks for the many things we have not experienced, though we still lament with those for whom these circumstances are very real. We still ask, why?

And then there are the things that we understand because we experience them, but for which we lack any theological or spiritual understanding. Where in your own personal experience have you found yourself asking, "Why?" Suffering? Loss? In joblessness? Loneliness? In other fears and anxieties? The circumstances may vary, but the question is the same, "Why?"

If we really seek a reason – justification or an explanation – then we are looking for the wrong kind of understanding. Instead we must seek understanding and wisdom from Understanding and Wisdom itself - the Holy Spirit. We must seek God. The very God who created us - became flesh in the person of Jesus

In this dramatic speech, I can't help but hear an echo. Do you hear it? The echo is from Job chapter 38. After all of Job's suffering and questions, God answers Job out of the whirlwind. God asks, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" Though Job has known all of the wisdom of the world, he is lacking Godly Wisdom, the Holy Spirit. The questions to Job continue: "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know... Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?— when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, and said, "Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped"?"

And now the voice of Wisdom from Proverbs: "Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth--
... When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him..." Behold, the Wisdom of God! Behold, the Holy Spirit!

runs. Is it good? bad? something I said or did wrong? I want to know, and I want to know now! I beg of you all - don't test me on this by telling me after the service that you have something important to say that must wait.

I think all of us have a desire for knowledge in one way or another. We've all met those who want to be professional students for as long as they can, moving from one degree to another, from one school to the next. Others want to know everything that is going on around them at all times. Imagine the multi-tasker who sits in front of the television, watching the news, reading the local paper, and perhaps talking on the phone at the same time. We even have devices that allow people to access anything on the internet at any time from anyplace, get instant notifications when new emails or messages are sent, all while talking on the phone! In one way or another, we constantly seek wisdom. So why, at the end of the day, do we still not understand?

Enter Woman Wisdom, the personification of the Holy Spirit that speaks to us through Proverbs today. The Holy Spirit not only illuminates our understanding and teaches us, as Jesus promised his disciples, but the Holy Spirit is Wisdom herself! The Holy Spirit helps us to understand God's Word, and to discern what God is calling us to do. If wisdom is what we seek, we need look no further than our Triune God.

“You Wouldn’t Understand” – Stephanie Wing, 5.30.10

Welcome to Trinity Sunday! We could spend a very long time exploring the doctrine and theology of the Trinity, but don’t worry – we won’t. At least not today. Instead, I want to focus on that mysterious third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. In fact, I hereby call this Sunday, May 30th, the second Sunday of Pentecost!

The Trinity is a mystery I don't think I will every fully understand - at least not in this lifetime. In fact, there are many things that I think I will never understand in this life, and I’m ok with that, most days. I used to take great offense when told, "Oh, you wouldn't understand." Come on - all of us younger siblings know this statement very well. It is said smugly, and if phrases were actions, it would be a game of keep away. Some older siblings take particular delight in this response, reminded us that no matter how mature or smart we might think we are, we are just the lowly younger sibling. They hold secret knowledge, and we couldn't possibly understand.

After reading our Gospel passage, I wondered if the disciples felt this way when Jesus spoke to them. After all that they had been through, Jesus says, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." It's like someone saying, "I have something very important to tell you, but it will have to wait." I can only speak for myself, but that drives me crazy! My curious takes that and